ALA Annual Meeting 2005
ALCTS Technical Services Directors of Large Research Libraries
Report of Recent Activities at the National Agricultural Library

AGRICOLA Index

A thorough internal review of the AGRICOLA Index was conducted by NAL this spring. This review found that there was shrinkage in scope and a significant decline in currency which has resulted in an increasingly marginalized product. In reaction, NAL has begun a process of re-scoping the index with a goal to produce a product that has a unique niche, is financially sustainable, and supports the future operations of the library. While the exact mix of articles to be indexed has yet to be determined, NAL is actively soliciting comments from AGRICOLA users. Comments can be e-mailed to future@nal.usda.gov.

Integrated Systems

A significant upgrade to our interlibrary loan and document delivery service occurred with the implementation of software from Relais International. The application is tightly integrated with our Voyager system and provides a smoother interface for the user by auto-populating the loan form with data from their AGRICOLA search. On the technical side, it permits us to automatically direct the request to the provider, manage our internal delivery queues, and has extensive statistical reports.

NAL staff is beta testing *Boolean Cube* for a summer release. It is a web based advance searching module for use with our Voyager system. Using a web form the user can easily construct complex Boolean searches by entering search terms and selecting the search indexes and Boolean operators. The resulting queries can be used interactively and stored as persistent canned searches. Boolean Cube will be integrated as both an advance search option in Voyager and downloadable as a client application by our users. The application will also be available for modification and use by other Voyager Libraries.

Electronic Repositories

A pilot electronic repository for USDA authored research is being implemented using the ZYLAB application. The initial implementation will involve two research units within USDA and is intended to resolve policy and workflow issues. Concurrently, we are planning the implementation of a much larger repository to house the intramural research of USDA researcher. Articles and presentations will be deposited post publication and accessible through the AGRICOLA index. Work on the technical and business plan for this larger institutional repository is scheduled to be complete in the Spring of 2006.

Budget

The President's FY'06 budget request for USDA is undergoing "markup" in both the House and Senate with action expected in each body this summer. These preliminary budgets are basically level in actual dollars with our present budget.

Personnel

Chris Cole was appointed the Associate Director for technical Services on February 21, 2005. Ellen Hamilton joined the library as our Electronic Licensing Librarian on the same date.